

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Town of Three Lakes, US Forest Service and MSA Professional Services(MSA), the engineering firm contracted to improve Military Road in the Town of Three Lakes, held a second informational meeting for the proposed Military Road project on March 14, 2007. Members of the Three Lakes Town Board were also present.

The Military Road Project was placed on the United States Highway Commission's road list for improvements in 2003 and was located at the bottom of the list. Recently, the Town was notified that funding for the improvements would be available beginning in the Fall of 2007.

Through the cooperative efforts of the Town of Three Lakes, the US Forest Service, and MSA, an informational meeting on this project was held in May of 2004. Because of the three year time period between that first public informational meeting and the federal funding being secured, The Town, Forest Service and MSA felt it necessary to hold another public informational meeting to once again clearly convey what improvements are being proposed and the affect, if any, the project will have on this US Forest Service, National Forest Scenic Byway. There has been much misunderstanding about Military Road's byway designation. Military Road is NOT a Federal Highway Administration, National Scenic Byway. Everyone does appreciate and cherish this National forest scenic byway.

The presentations by Rich Alhfs of the US Forest Service and Jim Bollman Jr of MSA explained in detail the preferred design alternative. They pointed out that the proposed road improvements are not standard Forest Service nor Wisconsin Department of Transportation "boiler plate" highway improvements. MSA's design is consistent with Chapter TRANS 204, Wis. Adm. Code "Existing Town Road Improvement Standards" and minimizes harm to the environment while at the same time improving the safety and maintainability of the forest scenic road. The intent of the preferred design was to ensure that the improvement project would indeed improve the roadway and not throw away precious tax dollars as the project is 100% federally funded.

Both Alhfs and Bollman made a strong point that "Military Road will not be widened". The traveled portion of the road will be almost identical to the traveled portion that is there now. Military Road currently has a traveled width that varies between 16 feet and 20 feet (i.e. 8 - 10 feet per lane) with 2 foot or less gravel shoulders giving a total existing roadway width up to 24 feet. As mandated by TRANS 204, Wis. Adm. Code, Military Road's proposed design of the traveled area shall consists of two nine (9) foot lanes(i.e. 18 feet of traveled way) and two foot shoulders on each side (1 foot paved, 1 foot gravel). This will give the roadway a consistent traveled way width of eighteen (18) feet and consistent shoulder width of two (2) feet each side of the traveled way. Ditches will be required in some areas to drain the pavement structure to promote the longevity of the roadway.

The meeting was structured to have all citizens approach the engineers and the US Forest Service individually after a brief presentation in order to provide a one on one interaction to respond to the questions and comments. However since many in the audience wanted answers to their

questions to be heard by everyone present, Mr. Bollman Jr (MSA) and the Town Board Supervisor Dave Hapka agreed to take questions.

Most questions were about potential speeding problems, why the road was going to be widened, what was the total cost of the project, how was everyone notified of this meeting and the proposed project and if they were not able to get questions answered would they be able to obtain that answer in the future?

Mr. Bollman replied that Military Road was not going to be widened, that speed limit signs would be posted upon completion of the project, that the total project cost was \$1.7 million dollars which was 100% federally funded, that all notices of the project and of the meeting were completed in compliance with State and Federal requirements and that beyond the requirements, letters were mailed to property owners along Military Road. MSA, the Town of Three Lakes and the US Forest Service encouraged all attendees to complete written comments and questions, to be reviewed and if possible answered individually at a later date.

The town will review the comments for the design as it stands to determine if modifications to the plans are appropriate and feasible.

Tony Hallman
Town Administrator/Clerk